

An Ecclesiological Response to the Hunger Crisis in Local Churches of Anglophone, Cameroon.

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Abstract

Every Church exists in a society primarily to serve God and to minister to the people in that society. It is expected of her to be a spiritual rescue center, socially or economically, as the case may be. Unfortunately, the Church in Anglophone Cameroon finds herself in the middle of the ongoing socio-political quagmire. Several challenges come with such a situation as the one in Anglophone Cameroon. There has been substantial infrastructural loss, a death toll on the increase, and hunger-stricken people in the pews. Many hungry parishioners in the local church pews of Anglophone Cameroon have motivated this paper. The writer has attempted to discuss an overview of Ecclesiology, which is the study of the Church, analyzed the history of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, and presented an overview of hunger. There are undoubtedly several types of hunger, but the one discussed in the paper is hunger for food. The biblical position on the hunger-stricken has been dealt with, which is that right from the Old Testament where the Israelites were not to harvest all crops from their farms. In the New Testament, Jesus fed the hungry. The ecclesiological response to the millions who are hunger stricken in the local churches is that the Church should feed them, counsel those starving through their Pastor, and teach Christian traders about stewardship so that they do not overcharge for basic prices of food. The critical analytical method is employed in this paper.

Introduction

Every Church exists in a society primarily to serve God and minister to that society's people. It is expected of her to be a spiritual, social, or economic rescue center, as the case may be. Unfortunately, the Church in Anglophone Cameroon finds herself amid an ongoing socio-political quagmire. Several challenges come with such a situation as the one in Anglophone Cameroon. There has been substantial infrastructural loss, a death toll on the increase, and hunger-stricken people in the pews. Many hungry parishioners in the local church pews of Anglophone Cameroon have motivated the writing of this paper. The writer shall attempt to discuss an overview of Ecclesiology, analyze the history of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon, briefly present an overview of hunger, the biblical position on the hunger-stricken, and an ecclesiological response to the millions who are hunger stricken in the local churches. The critical analytical method is employed in this paper.

An Overview of Ecclesiology

Ecclesiology is the study of the Church, which traces its roots back to the Old Testament people of God.¹⁸⁷ These are the people God chose; Israel. Milliard J. Erickson dealing with the etymology of the word "church," opines that *Eklessia* referred to the assembly of the citizens of a city.¹⁸⁸ This connotes that it was not a religious word but has only gained that meaning in Christianity. It thus translates in the Septuagint, the Hebrew word *qahal* used for ordinary crowds (Gen. 49:6, Numb 22:4).¹⁸⁹ Gyang D. Pam affirms that ecclesiology is the

¹⁸⁷D.J. Tidball, "Church," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* eds. T.

Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D.A. Carson et al (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press,2000), 407.

¹⁸⁸Milliard J. Erickson, *Introducing Christian Doctrine* Ed. L. Arnold Hustad (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1992), 330.

¹⁸⁹Tidball, 409.

theological understanding of the Christian Church.¹⁹⁰ *Ekklesiazo* means 'to summon an assembly.' It has as cognate the noun *ekklesia*, which refers to Church.¹⁹¹ That is to say, a gathering of people. However, the word 'church' has also come to be used in referring to a place where Christians gather and listen to the word preached and taught every week.¹⁹² These are people who follow Jesus as their Lord and Savior.¹⁹³ Tidball, in that light, avers that Paul uses *ekklesia* mainly with the gathering of the local congregation (Rom 16:5, 2 Thess. 2:1, Philem. 2), which usually meets in someone's house.¹⁹⁴ That is the meaning used in this paper. The hunger-stricken gather weekly in the local churches of Anglophone Cameroon as well. As local churches in Anglophone Cameroon, there is a need for an ecclesiological response to their hunger, that is, a response that reveals the character of Christ.

Brief History of the Anglophone Crisis

War is commonly believed to be as old as a social existence; as long as there remain class contradictions, it will remain a tragic part of human life.¹⁹⁵ When some groups feel superior to others they deem inferior, it breeds animosity, often resulting in conflicts. The crisis in the Anglophone part of Cameroon may not have been labeled as a full-blown war. Still, from every indication, it is a war between the government of the Republic of Cameroon, otherwise known as "La Republic," and separatist

¹⁹⁰Gyang D. Pam, *A Compendium of Theology* (Jos, Nigeria: Sele Printing and Publishing, 2021), 392.

¹⁹¹Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Norton Street, Nottingham: Intervarsity Press, 1994), 854-855.

¹⁹²Gabriel Oluwasegun, *Principles and practice of Church Management*, New Edition (Ibadan, Nigeria: International Publishers Limited ,2016), 11.

¹⁹³Ronald F. Youngblood, F.F. Bruce and R. K. Harrison, *Nelson's Bible Dictionary: A Complete Guide to Understanding the World of the Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 41.

¹⁹⁴Tidball, 409-410.

¹⁹⁵ Negussay Ayele, "A Brief Profile of Wars in the Horn of Africa," *Northeast African Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1/2 (1984): 8.

fighters known as "Amba Boys or Amba Fighters." The causes of this crisis are both remote and immediate. The Anglophone crisis began in 2016 with the demand to restore the two-state federation.¹⁹⁶ Towards the end of World War One, with the defeat of Germany, the League of Nations appointed France and Britain joint trustees of Kamerun¹⁹⁷ (German spelling for Cameroon), with France taking the more significant part. France and Britain had unanimously fought to oust Germany, which had beguiled Britain and colonized Cameroon during the Scramble for Africa. On the eve of independence, British Cameroon voted to join La Republic du Cameroun in February 1961 through the United Nations Plebiscite. Consequently, it obtained independence on October 1, 1961, with the vocabulary of East and West Cameroons.¹⁹⁸ Piet Konings and Francis B. Nyamnjoh avow that this amalgamation of two states, in the long run, birthed the 'Anglophone' consciousness among people of West Cameroon who felt marginalized by the Francophone-dominated State and even by the Francophone population as a whole.¹⁹⁹ This serves as one of the remote causes of the crisis and makes it clear that it was only a matter of time before the climax would ensue, as it has since 2016. Before 2016, the Anglophones had been exasperated and disgruntled as they felt like second-class citizens in a country they both owned with Francophone Cameroonians. C. Nna-Emeka Okereke further expounds on this as he avers that the current crisis results from the years of assimilation of English-speaking Cameroonians.²⁰⁰ The Anglophone minority has felt marginalized by the La

¹⁹⁶ C. Nna-Emeka Okereke, "Analyzing Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis," *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (March 2018):8.

¹⁹⁷ "Report Part Title: The Roots of the Anglophone Problem: Colonial Legacy and Failure of the Centralized Model," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep31413.5> (accessed September, 2022).

¹⁹⁸ Okereke, 8.

¹⁹⁹ Piet Konings and Francis B. Nyamnjoh, "The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (June, 1997): 207.

²⁰⁰Ibid., 9.

Republic and has been made to feel like sojourners in their own country. Most offices in Cameroon are staffed by French speakers who hardly speak English or are interested in speaking it. Even when posted to Anglophone Cameroon, law enforcement officers mostly speak French and do not bother that the people they are addressing do not understand French. Though French and English are the official languages of the Republic of Cameroon and are supposed to be of equal status, not everybody speaks the two languages, mainly because of illiteracy. As an immediate cause of the crisis, J.D. Pefok posits that in September 2016, lawyers from Anglophone Cameroon did a peaceful protest over the marginalization of the Anglophone Common Law; they went on strike in October 2016, and in November, Anglophone Teachers Trade Union protested against distortions confronting the educational system in the Anglophone regions.²⁰¹ Abiem a Tchoyi gives the following as immediate causes of the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon;²⁰²

1. Criticism of the centralized State.
2. Transfer of decision-making centers to Yaoundé, far from the Anglophone population and their problems.
3. Failure to respect commitments to equitably consider the institutional, legal, and administrative cultures and traditions inherited from the former administering powers.
4. Non-compliance to the solemn promises made during the referendum campaigns (1961 plebiscite and 1972 referendum).
5. The change of the name of the State from the United Republic of Cameroon to the Republic of Cameroon.

²⁰¹ J.D. Pefok, "The Anglophone Crisis Causes Indefinite Delay of Bar Elections," *The Post*, No. 01793, Friday, 3 February 2017.

²⁰² Abiem a Tchoyi, "Anglophone Marginalization: Cold Hard Facts," *The Rambler*, Edition No. 0037, 18 January 2017.

6. Disrespect for bilingualism in the public sector even though the constitution makes English and French two official languages of equal status.

Sadly, the Biya-led government has largely been "indifferent" to Anglophone grievances.²⁰³ Some officials have denied the assertion that there is such a thing as an Anglophone crisis. Before the entire world, they asserted that all was well and that whatever the matter was, it was controlled. It is highly hypocritical and pretentious how the La Republic government will urge Russia and Ukraine to settle their disputes amicably; simultaneously, they have theirs and have been using force to silence those who have asked to be treated equally. This is due to poor political governance, which was why Anglophones felt marginalized in the first place.²⁰⁴ The government should have done everything to right these wrongs, but unfortunately, force has been their best answer. If one talks of ceasefire and laying down arms, it ought to be between the two sides, but it would seem the La Republic government wants separatists to lay down their weapons while still holding on to theirs. This does not mean the writer supports any side in the ongoing socio-political crisis. This writer's candid opinion of why the crisis has lingered this long is pride and miscalculation. When the crisis began, those who picked up arms must have thought that it would be a matter of months of resistance and the federation they demanded would be achieved. The French-dominated government also underestimated the separatist fighters since they erroneously felt they were untrained and could not stand on par with trained soldiers. At this juncture, pride will not lead the movement to concede defeat, nor will it allow the separatists to accept that they miscalculated, for, in the end, the poor

²⁰³ "Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis: How the Catholic Church Can Promote Dialogue," <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep31594> (accessed September, 2022).

²⁰⁴ "Cameroon," <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/hunger/internationaldevelopment/joininghands/joining-hands-country-profiles/cameroon-jh/> (accessed September, 2022).

masses are those suffering because. In all fairness, one cannot say the masses are safe from either of the Titans. People have become targets by those who took up arms to fight for them if they suspect any links with government forces and vice versa. The government soldiers know the spots where separatist fighters are. Still, they will pick innocent civilians and insist they show the camps, and sometimes, once they leave, the other group comes and picks the person for having been seen with the former. Nobody to report to, as there is total anarchy. There has been a great deal of unprofessionalism on the part of La Republic forces who use Church premises as their base in launching attacks. In this writer's village, the military occupied the Presbyterian Church in Tatum in the North West Region for several months forcing parishioners to worship in their houses. Recently in Bamkika'ay, these forces illegally broke into the Pastor's house and the Baptist Church Hall to launch their attack on Separatist fighters Saturday, September 10, 2022. After that day's battle, they stormed the wards of the Bansa Baptist Hospital and forcefully took away an alleged separatist fighter and his caretaker, who was undergoing treatment. As of this writing, nobody knows if they are still alive. One asks if a mission hospital like the one mentioned is supposed to take sides in the crisis before treating a patient. If the Hospital takes sides, what becomes of the Hippocratic oath, which urges medical practitioners to make patients' interests primordial?²⁰⁵ As if that was not enough, the Separatist fighters, who were infuriated and embittered, demanded the Hospital provides their brother; otherwise, no Hospital vehicle could travel to Bamenda. It has included all Cameroon Baptist Convention pastors since the attacks on the separatists came from a Baptist Church premises; it is alleged they know something about it. Unfortunately, when the administrator of the Hospital went to the Brigade in Tobin, Kumbo, to see to it that some workers that the forces of La Republic held hostage, also accusing them of siding with the separatist fighters by offering them medical

²⁰⁵ "Hippocratic oath." *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011.

attention be released, he too was remanded in custody up till the moment of the writing of this paper. This is the ugly picture of what is happening in Anglophone Cameroon. Statistics reveal that there have been about 712,000 internally displaced people since 2016, 4000 civilian deaths, 700.000 students out of school, and 2.2 million people in need of humanitarian aid.²⁰⁶ Ludovic Amara asserts that about 60.000 Cameroonian refugees are in neighboring Nigeria alone.²⁰⁷ Most of those left in Anglophone Cameroon villages cannot run away because of age or have nowhere to run. They keep running into bushes for safety, and once they notice the place is calm, they return and keep repeating the cycle. This writer's wife has had to carry their son on her back while pregnant to run into the bushes in the middle of the night, sometimes under torrential downpours, for safety because La Republic forces storm the village in search of separatist fighters and the process brutalize anyone they meet in the process. Many churches are empty and almost closing down; many pastors have no sheep to tender for since they are all scattered. The few people, mostly older, are hunger-stricken and urgently need attention. Non-Governmental organizations like *Shumas* through the World Food Program have been trying to salvage the situation. Still, their effort is not meeting the need of everyone as a greater number of persons are dependent.

An Overview of Hunger

The word 'hunger' has many social, spiritual, or economic meanings, but as Angela Mears avers, the empty stomach and hunger for food readily come to mind.²⁰⁸ It is a state of weakness

²⁰⁶“Anglophone Crisis,” <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2022/country-chapters/cameroon> (accessed September, 2022).

²⁰⁷ Ludovic Amara, “Anglophone crisis: UN reports over 700,000 internally displaced persons and over 60,000 Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria,” [Anglophone crisis: UN reports over 700,000 internally displaced persons and over 60,000 Cameroonian refugees in Nigeria \(stopblablacam.com\)](https://stopblablacam.com/), (accessed September, 2022).

²⁰⁸ Angela Mears, “Hunger,” *The North American Review*, Vol. 296, No. 1 (Winter 2011): 34.

resulting from a lack of food.²⁰⁹ It can cause conflicts, and conflicts can as well cause it.²¹⁰ There are strange things people do as a result of hunger for food. They include but are not limited to thieving, prostitution, and lying. It is common parlance that a hungry man is an angry one, and as such, they can go to any length to assuage their hunger. Sometimes, it results in population density, social disruption, and war.²¹¹ Hunger will be inevitable when there are more people than the available land to work or jobs. War also causes hunger because, during the war, there is a lot of destruction, or people cannot cultivate their farms; the Anglophone Cameroonians who are agrarian is only an example. Conflicts exacerbate the situation of hunger,²¹² and the case of Anglophone Cameroonians is no exception. It is also caused by social inequality, poverty, or environmental degradation.²¹³ When available resources are not distributed evenly, it causes some have more than enough while others barely have what to survive on. Hilal Elver affirms that even though food crises differ from nation to nation, they are all products of manufactured causes, whether armed conflicts, political turmoil or climate change.²¹⁴ As much as one can assert that human factors majorly cause hunger or food crisis, as Elver has opined, they are not always the sole causes, for

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- ²⁰⁹ Nkwain Adeline Yafi, "A Perspective From Cameroon: Hunger, Poverty, and Terrorism in the North," <https://www.worldhunger.org/hungerpovertyandterrorisminnortherncaeroon/> (accessed September, 2022).
- ²¹⁰ Susan Shepler, "The Real and Symbolic Importance of Food in War: Hunger Pains and Big Men's Bellies in Sierra Leone," *Africa Today*, Vol. 58, No. 2, *Special Issue: Everyday Life in Postwar Sierra Leone* (Winter 2011): 46.
- ²¹¹ Frederick H. Buttel, "Ending Hunger in Developing Countries," *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol. 29, No. 1, *Utopian Visions: Engaged Sociologies for the 21st Century* (January, 2000):14.
- ²¹² David Laborde, Livia Bizikova, Tess Lallemand and Carin Smaller, "Ending Hunger: What would it cost," *International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)* (2016):12, <http://www.jstor.com/stable/resrep17133> .
- ²¹³ Buttel, 17.
- ²¹⁴ Hilal Elver, "Suffering from Hunger in a World of Plenty," *Middle East Report*, No. 286, *Suffering and the Limits of Relief* (Spring 2018):14.

natural disasters like earthquakes, eruptions, and floods destroy places and farms in the process. Often, hunger forces people to move through harsh terrains for food.²¹⁵ When people are hungry, they no longer care where to get food. It is akin to the situation of the four lepers in 2 Kings 7:1-5 who decided to risk it all to go to the camp of the Syrians, the enemy camp, to look for food. Elver asserts that hunger and starvation kill approximately nine million people yearly, more than malaria, HIV, and Tuberculosis combined.²¹⁶ Although hunger keeps increasing yearly, food production has increased because the world produces enough food to feed ten billion people. However, it is ironic that people are still dying of hunger. This is accounted for by the fact that many people are poor and cannot afford food.

Meenakshi Gigi Durham avers that the lack of food (hunger) makes people mentally unstable.²¹⁷ Out of personal experience as a pastor serving in the Anglophone part of Cameroon, the writer has had to counsel people who are mentally unstable because they have shifted from having to starving. Most times, because these people depend on the goodwill of others, the trauma of seeing themselves depend on others weighs down on them. Elver concurs with Durham as he posits that hunger does undermine resilience to absorb or recover from other shocks, such as political unrest.²¹⁸ There are thousands of hunger-stricken people in Anglophone Cameroon Churches. Most of them are hunger stricken because of the crisis, as they have lost all they worked for. The next part of this article discusses what the Bible says about hunger.

²¹⁵ Tina Wallace, "Refugees and Hunger in Eastern Sudan," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 33, War and Famine (August, 1985): 64.

²¹⁶ Elver, 14.

²¹⁷ Meenakshi Gigi Durham, "Hunger Pangs," *The Iowa Review*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (Fall, 2012):4

²¹⁸Elver, 16.

Biblical Position of Hunger-Stricken

The Bible is not silent about the hunger-stricken in society. From the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy 24:19-21, YAHWEH gave the Israelites instructions not to harvest everything from their farms; It was because of this provision that Ruth took advantage of Ruth 2 and 3. In their commentary, H. D. Spence and Joseph S. Exell noted that Boaz showed his practical sympathy by giving parched corn to Ruth to eat and securing that her gleaning should be even more successful.²¹⁹ He never stopped providing for the hunger-stricken Ruth but protected her, and that is an example to be emulated. Proverbs 25:21 implores us to feed even our enemies. In the New Testament, the Greek words are *limos* as a noun meaning 'hunger' and *prospeinos* as an adjective for 'intensive hunger'.²²⁰ The implication of this is that hunger is in levels. When Jesus' disciples were hungry and began to pluck ears of corn to eat on the Sabbath, Jesus, because he cared about them, defended them before the Pharisees in Matthew 12:1 and 2. He could not send the multitudes who had been with him for days without food in Matthew 15:32. These and several other examples in the Bible prove God intends that the hunger-stricken in and around us should be fed. The next section discusses how the church in Anglophone Cameroon can respond to the hunger stricken in her pews.

Ecclesiological Response

The ecclesiological response in this section discusses what the Church should do with the hunger-stricken led by their Pastor. When people are hungry, one of the first places they naturally

²¹⁹ H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary: Ruth, I and II Samuel* (Peabody, Massachusetts, 2011), 41.

²²⁰ W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, Jr., *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words: Keyed to Strong's Reference Numbers* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1970), 315.

go for help is the Church,²²¹ irrespective of whether they are members. Billy Kangas is so concerned about the hunger-stricken who are not only in Anglophone churches but all over the society that he asserts that making it cease is a moral issue. For it to be dealt with, there is a need for prayers and putting resources together.²²² It is important to pray, but praying without planning is equivalent to playing without knowing. After prayers, there is a need for action. Some of them are;

Feed those hungry to the best of their ability. Kabakura Jean Bosco Ceusi avers that thousands of needy of the Anglophone region are hungry. The situation is worsening by the day if the crisis continues unabated.²²³ Unfortunately, those involved have made demands that neither is willing to concede. During the martial Law clampdown in Poland on December 13, 1981, by General Wojciech Jaruzelski, which brought untold hardship to the Poles,²²⁴ church people outdid the governments of the day by massively donating relief materials.²²⁵ Just like the Polish Church, the Church in Anglophone Cameroon is encouraged to double its efforts in providing food for the hungry. Religious congregations are estimated to give about 7 billion yearly to people in need, about 1/7th of their total revenue.²²⁶ As already established above, the Church is doing a

²²¹ "People Are Hungry, and the Church Responds,"

<https://archny.org/people-are-hungry-and-the-church-responds/> (accessed September, 2022).

²²² Billy Kangas, "Fifty Ways Catholics are Working on Ending Hunger Today!" <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/billykangas/2014/07/50-ways-catholics-are-working-on-ending-hunger-today.html>, (accessed September, 2022).

²²³ Kabakura Jean Bosco Ceusi, "Cameroon: Western Region Continue To Suffer From Hungry," [Cameroon: Western region continue to suffer from hungry \(oeildhumanite.com\)](http://Cameroon: Western region continue to suffer from hungry (oeildhumanite.com)), (accessed September, 2022).

²²⁴ "Martial Law in Poland 1981—1983," <https://ipn.gov.pl/en/brief-history-of-poland/collected-content/9083.Collecte d-Content-Martial-Law-in-Poland-19811983.html> (accessed September, 2022).

²²⁵ Harry Genet, "Churches Respond to a Hungry Poland," <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1982/february-5/churches-respond-to-hungry-poland.html> (accessed September, 2022).

²²⁶ "What is the Church's Role in Ending Hunger?" <https://www.crosswalk.com/church/pastors-or-leadership/what-is->

lot in this area, but she is encouraged to do more because the number of hunger-stricken continues to rise.

It should be noted that hunger cuts across religious lines²²⁷ the situation in Anglophone Cameroon is not a religious war but affects everyone. Many readily run to the Church with the hope of finding assistance. Commenting on Mark 6:31-35, when Jesus fed five thousand men, R.T. France posits that Jesus initially wanted to have a retreat with his followers, but the unwanted crowd at that time followed and frustrated his retreat plan, but Jesus still fed them.²²⁸ The situation in Anglophone Cameroon, which has extended to Francophone Cameroon (because some Anglophones who have run away from the crisis have found peace there, and since they have no jobs, they depend on the goodwill of the churches to feed), is no different in that people go to wherever they will find food whether they are bona fide members of the Church in question or not. James D. Edwards asserts that Mark records the feeding of the 5000 by Jesus immediately following the episode of the extravagant party thrown by Herod but juxtaposes the two parties and shows how Jesus feeds the people who were like sheep without a shepherd out compassion for them.²²⁹ The Church in Anglophone Cameroon must continually let the compassion of Jesus guide her heart if she must reach out to those starving, even when they are not her members.

Try to establish them provided there is the means. Providing food for the hunger-stricken in the Church is essential; still, this writer opines that if the Church in Anglophone Cameroon can establish those most affected, it will be worthwhile. If the

[the-churchs-role-in-ending-hunger-560660.html](#) (accessed September, 2022).

²²⁷ David Beckmann and Arthur Simon, *Grace at the Table: Ending Hunger in God's World* (New York, Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1999), 5.

²²⁸ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 260.

²²⁹ James R. Edwards, *The Gospel According to Mark* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 190.

financial means is there, it will salvage the situation better. In the long run, it will prevent the Church from feeding everybody for as long as the crisis lasts, which is unknown now. Once people have what to do, they can fend for themselves and not continue to return to the Church to ask for help. The concern is how long and how much the Church can spend on this, which is why this suggestion is contingent on the availability of resources.

Pray and counsel with them. As Nditemeh Charlemagne avers, the Church remains apolitical in the ongoing Anglophone crisis²³⁰ but will not relent on her onus of praying for the nation for peace to return. Ngala Hansel avows that it is unfortunate that at the time of this article, the Bansa Baptist Hospital administrator with three other staff are still in custody by la Republic forces accusing them of collaborating with Separatists even though the Cameroon Baptist Convention has denied those accusations.²³¹ The Hospitals or the churches do not take sides in a crisis such as this. Because the Church is apolitical, they are encouraged to continue praying for peace to return to Cameroon and pray for this hunger-stricken in their pews. Praying for God to provide for them and praying that the Lord will comfort them since many are also psychologically affected. There are hungry people in the pews every meeting day as many no longer work or do business because they have either been looted or infernos have razed down their sources of livelihood. In Tatum village, where the writer of this article hails from, government forces burnt down a whole market in a single day, forcing millionaires to become beggars. The Church, however, still owes it as a duty to pray for the peace of her Jerusalem, for in her peace she will find hers (Ps 122:6). As they pray, pastors should counsel with them because some of the victims need

²³⁰ Ngala Hansel, "Arrest of medical staff in Kumbo: CBC executive calls for fasting, prayer," <https://cameroonnewsagency.com/arrest-of-medical-staff-in-kumbo-cbc-executive-calls-for-fasting-prayer/> (accessed September, 2022).

²³¹ Ibid.

more than food since they are emotionally and psychologically traumatized.

Encourage other members of the Church who are business-oriented, especially food vendors, to understand and practice their stewardship of possession at this time (Gen 2:15, Matt 25:14-30, Lk 16:1-12). They should be dissuaded from raising the basic prices of food so that their brethren can afford it. It is not strange that despite the hunger resulting from the Anglophone crisis, some people have usurped the situation and made high profits with their highly inflated prices of food items, making it hard for average families to buy. This writer asserts that since some of these business people (buyam-sellams) are members of some churches, the men of God ought to remind them of the fact that they are merely stewards of whatever resources they have so that they can use them to glorify the Lord by not overcharging as is the case. It is also lamentable but understandable that the cost of transportation is also at its peak, increasing almost by 500 Percent in some cases, thereby forcing the increment in prices; it still does not eradicate the fact that some business people overdo it to garner profits through their exorbitant prices.

Conclusion.

Can the Church in Anglophone Cameroon solve all the problems of those most hit by the crisis and are hunger stricken? Should they feed only their members? Does she have the money to care for this hunger-stricken in Anglophone Cameroon? These questions need answers; however, the Church in Anglophone Cameroon is doing her best with hunger-stricken pews. This paper overviewed the Anglophone crisis and hunger, looked at the biblical position on the hunger-stricken, and provided an ecclesiological response to hunger-stricken in local church pews. The writer notes that, the church in Anglophone has done nobly but is encouraged to do more as the Lord provides.

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